

REMARKS

In the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the cross-linking agent (B-1) is not a resin. This amendment is supported by the specification, for example, page 37.

No new matter has been added and entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 1-14 will be all the claims pending in the application.

I. Response to Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Tao (U.S. Pat. 6,977,131 B2).

Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are patentable over Tao for at least the following reasons.

Specifically, in the present invention, the cross-linking agent (B-1) is not a resin. As described at page 37, lines 13-14 of the present specification, the cross-linking agent of the present invention is aimed at preventing resin formation or gelation. In contrast, a resole resin was used in Example 4 of Tao, which is relied upon by the Examiner. Moreover, Tao does not disclose in Example 4, a compound which may correspond to the cross-linking agent (B-1) of the present invention.

Further, although Tao describes that two or more cross-linking agents may be used in combination, it does not provide any guidance or benefits in choosing the specific combination of a phenol derivative having, in a molecule, at least two groups bonded to a benzene ring such as a hydroxymethyl group, an alkoxymethyl group and an acyloxymethyl group, and an

alkoxymethylated melamine compound or resin, let alone the specific combination of a phenol derivative having, in a molecule, at least two groups bonded to a benzene ring such as a hydroxymethyl group, an alkoxymethyl group and an acyloxymethyl group, 3 to 5 benzene rings and a molecular weight of 2,000 or less, and an alkoxymethylated melamine compound or resin. For these reasons additionally, Applicants respectfully submit that Tao does not suggest the presently claimed composition.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are not obvious over Tao and thus the rejection should be withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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